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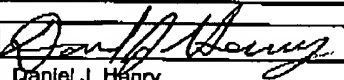
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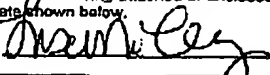
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<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27		Application Number	09/982,617-Conf. #8210
TOTAL AMOUNT OF PAYMENT (\$) 600.00		Filing Date	October 18, 2001
		First Named Inventor	Michael R. Boyd
		Examiner Name	J. R. Shaleheda
		Art Unit	2817
		Attorney Docket No.	65783-0007

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<p>FEE CALCULATION</p>							
<p>1. BASIC FILING, SEARCH, AND EXAMINATION FEES</p>							
	<p>FILING FEES</p>		<p>SEARCH FEES</p>		<p>EXAMINATION FEES</p>		
Application Type	Fee (\$)	Small Entity Fee (\$)	Fee (\$)	Small Entity Fee (\$)	Fee (\$)	Small Entity Fee (\$)	Fees Paid (\$)
Utility	300	150	500	250	200	100	
Design	200	100	100	50	130	65	
Plant	200	100	300	150	160	80	
Reissue	300	150	500	250	600	300	
Provisional	200	100	0	0	0	0	
<p>2. EXCESS CLAIM FEES</p>							
<p>Fee Description</p>							<p>Small Entity Fee (\$)</p>
<p>Each claim over 20 (including Reissues)</p>							50
<p>Each independent claim over 3 (including Reissues)</p>							25
<p>Multiple dependent claims</p>							200
<p></p>							100
<p></p>							360
<p></p>							180
<p>Total Claims</p>		<p>Extra Claims</p>		<p>Fee (\$)</p>		<p>Fee Paid (\$)</p>	
<p>HP = highest number of total claims paid for, if greater than 20.</p>		<p></p>		<p></p>		<p></p>	
<p>Indep. Claims</p>		<p>Extra Claims</p>		<p>Fee (\$)</p>		<p>Fee Paid (\$)</p>	
<p>HP = highest number of independent claims paid for, if greater than 3.</p>		<p></p>		<p></p>		<p></p>	
<p>3. APPLICATION SIZE FEE</p>							
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<p>Total Sheets</p>		<p>Extra Sheets</p>		<p>Number of each additional 50 or fraction thereof</p>		<p>Fee (\$)</p>	
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<p>SUBMITTED BY</p>			
Signature		Registration No. (Attorney/Agent)	59,372
Name (Print/Type)	Daniel J. Henry	Telephone	(248) 593-3323
		Date	January 3, 2007

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FAX TRANSMISSION**DATE:** January 3, 2007**PTO IDENTIFIER:** Application Number 09/982,617-Conf. #8210
Patent Number**Inventor:** Michael R. Boyd et al.**MESSAGE TO:** US Patent and Trademark Office**FAX NUMBER:** (571) 273-8300**FROM:** RADER, FISHMAN & GRAUER PLLC

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PHONE: (248) 593-3323**Attorney Dkt. #:** 65783-0007**PAGES (Including Cover Sheet):** 31**CONTENTS:** Fee Transmittal (1 page)
Appeal Brief Transmittal (1 page)
Appeal Brief (27 pages)
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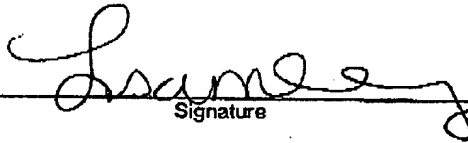
Application No. (if known): 09/982,617

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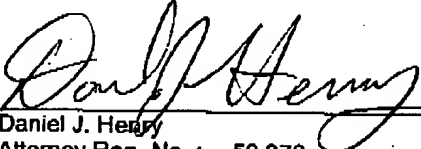
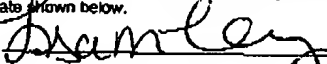
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TRANSMITTAL OF APPEAL BRIEF			Docket No. 65783-0007
In re Application of: Michael R. Boyd et al.			
Application No. 09/982,617-Conf. #8210	Filing Date October 18, 2001	Examiner J. R. Sheleheda	Group Art Unit 2617
Invention: MULTI-FORMAT MEDIA DECODER AND METHOD OF USING SAME AS AN INTERFACE WITH A DIGITAL NETWORK			
<u>TO THE COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS:</u>			
Transmitted herewith is the Appeal Brief in this application, with respect to the Notice of Appeal filed: <u>January 3, 2007</u>			
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 Daniel J. Henry Attorney Reg. No. : 59,372 RADER, FISHMAN & GRAUER PLLC 39533 Woodward Avenue Suite 140 Bloomfield Hills, Michigan 48304 (248) 593-3323		Dated: <u>January 3, 2007</u>	
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(Lisa M. Terry)

Docket No.: 65783-0007
(PATENT)**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In re Patent Application of:
Michael R. Boyd et al.

Application No.: 09/982,617

Confirmation No.: 8210

Filed: August 18, 2001

Art Unit: 2617

For: Multi-Format Media Decoder and Method of
Using Same As An Interface With A Digital
Network

Examiner: Sheleheda, J. R.

APPEAL BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

This is an Appeal Brief under Rule 41.37 appealing the decision of the Primary Examiner set forth in the Final Office Action dated July 3, 2006 ("Final Office Action"). Each of the topics required by Rule 41.37 is presented herewith and is labeled appropriately.

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Application No.: 09/982,617

Docket No.: 65783-0007

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I. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real parties in interest is Yazaki North America, Inc., the assignee of record, a corporation organized and existing under the laws of the state of Michigan, and having a place of business at 6801 Haggerty Road, Canton, Michigan 48187.

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II. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

Applicants (hereinafter "Appellants") are not aware of any related appeals or interferences that would affect the Board's decision on the current appeal.

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III. STATUS OF CLAIMS

Claims 1-41 are pending. Claims 3-10, 13-28, 32-35, and 38-41 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-2, 11-12, 29-31, and 36-37 are the subject of this appeal and are reproduced in the attached Claims Appendix. The independent claims are 1, 11, 29, and 36.

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IV. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

Appellants did not file any amendments after final rejection.

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V. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

The presently claimed invention includes decoding audio and audiovisual digital data streams from a digital network in a vehicle. The following is a concise explanation of the subject matter defined in each of the independent claims involved in this appeal, as required by 37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(1)(v). In general, the following explanation is not intended to be used to construe the claims, which are believed to speak for themselves, nor do Appellants intend the following explanation to modify or add any claim elements, or to constitute a disclaimer of any equivalents to which the claims would otherwise be entitled, nor is any discussion of certain preferred embodiments herein intended to disclaim other possible embodiments. References herein to the Specification are intended to be exemplary and not limiting.

A. Claim 1

Claim 1 recites a multi-format decoder board. The decoder board 102 is used for decoding audiovisual data streams in a plurality of encoding formats for use by one or more audiovisual output devices. (Specification, page 5, line 19; Figure 2). The decoder board 102 comprises an interface stage 107 for interfacing with a digital data network 123. (Specification, page 6, lines 11-18; Figure 1). By way of further explanation, and with reference to Appellant's Figures 3 and 4, digital data network 123 may include a fiber optic network 110. (Specification, page 9, lines 17-19; Figures 3 and 4).

The system further comprises a multi-format decoder 108 for decoding at least two different encoding formats for an audiovisual data stream. (Specification, page 10, lines 9-29; Page 7, lines 25-30). By way of further explanation, the formats supported preferably include audio compact disc (CD), digital video (or versatile) disc (DVD), video compact disc (VCD), read-only memory compact disc (CD ROM), MP3 audio (an audio layer of the MPEG standard), Motion Pictures Expert Group Standard 1 (MPEG-1), MPEG-2, MPEG-4, and Motion JPEG. (Specification, page 5, line 26 – page 6, line 1).

The system further comprises a microcontroller 106 for controlling the interface stage 107 and the decoder 108. (Specification, page 6, lines 20-21; page 12, lines 10-11; Figures 3 and 4). The system further comprises connections 103b, 109a, 114, 136, 137 for connecting the decoder board 102 to one or more audiovisual output devices 101. (Specification, page 12, lines 12-17; page 10, lines 21-29; page 11, lines 22-25; Figures 2-5).

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B. Claim 2

Claim 2 depends from claim 1 and recites wherein the interface stage 107 is an optical interface stage for interfacing the decoder board 102 with a fiber optic network 110. (Specification, page 9, lines 17-19; Figures 3 and 4).

C. Claim 11

Claim 11 recites multi-media system in a vehicle. The system comprises a digital data network installed in a vehicle. (Specification, page 6, lines 11-18; Figure 1). The system further comprises at least one storage, playback or receiver device on-board the vehicle for providing an encoded audiovisual data stream to the digital data network. (Specification, page 7, lines 21-24). The network 123 may be connected to a DVD player 90, an audio CD player (or CD changer) 91, a video compact disc (VCD) player 92, a floppy disk drive 93, a hard drive 94, a semiconductor or electronic memory unit 95, an analog antenna and tuner 96 and a satellite antenna 97. (Specification, page 8, lines 8-11; Figure 2). The system further comprises at least one audiovisual output device 98, 99, 122 connected to the digital data network 123. The typical output devices that may receive and output the audiovisual data include a television or video monitor (98), a liquid crystal display (99) and headphones (122) or speakers. (Specification, page 8, lines 27-30).

The system further comprises a multi-format decoder board. The decoder board 102 is used for decoding audiovisual data streams in a plurality of encoding formats, the decoder board decoding the audiovisual data stream for use by the at least one audiovisual output device. (Specification, page 5, line 19; Figure 2). The decoder board 102 comprises an interface stage 107 for interfacing with a digital data network 123. (Specification, page 6, lines 11-18; Figure 1). By way of further explanation, and with reference to Appellant's Figures 3 and 4, digital data network 123 may include a fiber optic network 110. (Specification, page 9, lines 17-19; Figures 3 and 4).

The system further comprises a multi-format decoder 108 for decoding at least two different encoding formats for an audiovisual data stream. (Specification, page 10, lines 9-29; Page 7, lines 25-30). By way of further explanation, the formats supported preferably include audio compact disc (CD), digital video (or versatile) disc (DVD), video compact disc (VCD), read-only memory compact disc (CD ROM), MP3 audio (an audio layer of the MPEG standard),

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Motion Pictures Expert Group Standard 1 (MPEG-1), MPEG-2, MPEG-4, and Motion JPEG. (Specification, page 5, line 26 – page 6, line 1).

The system further comprises a microcontroller 106 for controlling the interface stage 107 and the decoder 108. (Specification, page 6, lines 20-21; page 12, lines 10-11; Figures 3 and 4). The system further comprises connections 103b, 109a, 114, 136, 137 for connecting the decoder board 102 to one or more audiovisual output devices 101. (Specification, page 12, lines 12-17; page 10, lines 21-29; page 11, lines 22-25; Figures 2-5).

D. Claim 12

Claim 12 depends from claim 11 and recites wherein the digital data network 110 is a fiber optic network and the interface stage 107 is an optical interface stage for interfacing the decoder board 102 with the fiber optic network 110. (Specification, page 9, lines 17-19; Figures 3 and 4).

E. Claim 29

Claim 29 recites a method of handling a digital data stream carrying data encoded in a plurality of different encoding formats. (Specification, page 10, lines 9-29; Page 7, lines 25-30). By way of further explanation, the formats supported preferably include audio compact disc (CD), digital video (or versatile) disc (DVD), video compact disc (VCD), read-only memory compact disc (CD ROM), MP3 audio (an audio layer of the MPEG standard), Motion Pictures Expert Group Standard 1 (MPEG-1), MPEG-2, MPEG-4, and Motion JPEG. (Specification, page 5, line 26 – page 6, line 1). The method comprises processing the digital data stream through a decoder board 102. (Specification, page 5, line 19; Figure 2). The decoder board 102 comprises a multi-format decoder for decoding at least two different encoding formats for audiovisual data (Specification, page 5, line 19; Figure 2). The decoder board 102 further comprises outputting a resulting decoded audiovisual signal to one or more audiovisual output devices 101. (Specification, page 12, lines 12-17; page 10, lines 21-29; page 11, lines 22-25; Figures 2-5).

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F. Claim 30

Claim 30 depends from claim 29 and recites that the method further comprises interfacing said decoder board 102 to a digital data network 110 with an interface stage 107, said digital data stream coming to said decoder board via said digital data network 110. (Specification, page 9, lines 17-19; Page 6, line 27 – page 7, line 5; Figures 3 and 4).

G. Claim 31

Claim 31 depends from claim 30 and recites wherein the digital data stream is transmitted over the digital data network optically. (Specification, page 9, lines 17-19; Figures 3 and 4, interface stage 107 and fiber optic network 110).

H. Claim 36

Claim 36 recites a multi-format decoder board. The decoder board 102 is for decoding audiovisual data streams in a plurality of encoding formats for use by one or more audiovisual output devices. (Specification, page 5, line 19; Figure 2). The decoder board 102 comprises an interface means 107 for interfacing with a digital data network 123. (Specification, page 6, lines 11-18; Figure 1). By way of further explanation, and with reference to Appellant's Figures 3 and 4, digital data network 123 may include a fiber optic network 110. (Specification, page 9, lines 17-19; Figures 3 and 4).

The system further comprises a multi-format decoder means 108 for decoding at least two different encoding formats for an audiovisual data stream. (Specification, page 10, lines 9-29; Page 7, lines 25-30). By way of further explanation, the formats supported preferably include audio compact disc (CD), digital video (or versatile) disc (DVD), video compact disc (VCD), read-only memory compact disc (CD ROM), MP3 audio (an audio layer of the MPEG standard), Motion Pictures Expert Group Standard 1 (MPEG-1), MPEG-2, MPEG-4, and Motion JPEG. (Specification, page 5, line 26 – page 6, line 1).

The system further comprises a microcontroller means 106 for controlling the interface stage 107 and the decoder 108. (Specification, page 6, lines 20-21; page 12, lines 10-11; Figures 3 and 4). The system further comprises an output means (e.g., 103b, 109a, 114, 136, 137) for

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connecting the decoder board 102 to one or more audiovisual output devices 101. (Specification, page 12, lines 12-17; page 10, lines 21-29; page 11, lines 22-25; Figures 2-5).

I. Claim 37

Claim 37 depends from claim 36 and recites wherein the interface stage 107 is an optical interface stage for interfacing the decoder board 102 with a fiber optic network 110. (Specification, page 9, lines 17-19; Figures 3 and 4).

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VI. GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL**RECEIVED
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The grounds of rejection are:

1. Pending claims 1, 11, 29, 30, and 36 were finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by U.S. Patent 6,678,892 ("Lavelle"); and
2. Pending claims 2, 12, 31, and 37 were finally rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over Lavelle.

Accordingly, the issues presented in this appeal are:

1. Whether or not claims 1, 11, 29, 30, and 36 are anticipated by Lavelle; and
2. Whether or not claims 2, 12, 31, and 37 are unpatentable over Lavelle.

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VII. ARGUMENT

A. Claims 1, 11, and 36 Are Not Anticipated by Lavelle (Ground of Rejection No. 1).

Independent claim 1 recites, in part, “an interface stage for interfacing with a digital data network” and “a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder”. Claim 1 is discussed herein as exemplary; independent claims 11 and 36 include similar limitations. The Examiner asserted that these limitations are anticipated by Lavelle’s disclosure of a video bus 170, an audio bus 172, and a CPU. (Final Office Action, at 2). However, Lavelle contains absolutely no teaching or suggestion of “an interface stage for interfacing with a digital data network” and “a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder,” as claimed. For at least either of these independent reasons, each of which is discussed further below, Lavelle does not anticipate any of independent claims 1, 11, or 36.

1. “an interface stage for interfacing with a digital data network”

In fact, regarding the embodiment of Lavelle’s Figures 1A and 1B, Lavelle discloses that the “machine” may include “input/output (I/O) interface(s).” (Lavelle, Col. 3, Lines 32-35). However, Lavelle does not disclose “an interface stage for interfacing with a digital data network,” as claimed. The Examiner stated that:

Lavelle clearly discloses wherein the system comprises ‘input/output interfaces’ ... and wherein the system ‘interfaces’ with the digital data network (as all of the devices connect with the bus). (Final Office Action, at 14).

Although Lavelle includes the term “interface,” the claim states an interface for “interfacing with a digital data network.” Lavelle merely discloses the existence of “input/output (I/O) interface(s).” (Lavelle, Col. 3, Lines 32-35). Lavelle does not disclose in any way, for arguments sake, an interface to video bus 170 or audio bus 172. (Lavelle, Figures 1A and 1B, Col. 5, Lines 1-7). Thus, while Lavelle may generally mention an interface, there is no structure in Lavelle that supports any interface as connecting with any other component or system. The non-disclosure of Lavelle does not anticipate the claimed “interfacing with a digital data network.” Moreover, as discussed below in detail, video bus 170 or audio bus 172 do not disclose “a digital data network.” Thus, Lavelle’s generic statement of “input/output (I/O) interface(s)” does not teach or suggest the claimed interface at least because Lavelle does not

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teach or suggest "interfacing with a digital data network." In sum, Lavelle merely uses the term "interface" without disclosing any connections. Additionally, Lavelle does not disclose an interface for "interfacing with a digital data network," as claimed.

2. "a digital data network"

Regarding video bus 170 and audio bus 172, Lavelle does not disclose "a digital data network," as claimed. It is clear from Lavelle that video bus 170 and audio bus 172 carry different signal types (e.g., video and audio), that the two buses are separate, and that the signal types are contemplated as analog and not digital. (Lavelle, Figures 1A and 1B, Col. 5, Lines 1-7). The Examiner stated that:

Lavelle specifically discloses a digital bus which can comprise a single wire, which will interconnect a plurality of different devices. (Final Office Action, at 14).

Additionally, in the Advisory Action, dated October 18, 2006 ("Advisory Action"), the Examiner stated that:

The interconnection of a plurality of devices is, by definition, a network.... Thus, applicant's argument that Lavelle does not disclose a digital data network is not persuasive. A digital bus interconnecting a plurality of devices clearly constitutes a network. (Advisory Action, at 2).

Indeed, Lavelle does not disclose "a digital data network," as claimed. The Examiner has discussed whether Lavelle includes a "network," but has not addressed the claim language of a "digital data network." (Emphasis added).

Lavelle teaches separate buses for audio and video signals that carry like signals (e.g., analog signals) in an analog distribution implementation. Specifically, Lavelle stated:

While the buses (170, 172) shown in FIG. 3 are simply aggregations of wires carrying similar types of signals, other types of buses may be employed. For example, one or more wires or other signal transmission means may be used for each of the audio and the video signals, with the signals being multiplexed with respect to, for example, time, frequency, or codes. Given the teachings of the invention provided herein, one of ordinary skill in the related art will contemplate these and various other implementations of a bus, while maintaining the spirit and scope of the invention. (Lavelle, Col. 9, Line 60 - Col. 10, Line 2).

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Furthermore, while Lavelle may attempt to broaden the disclosure with non-specific language, Lavelle does not disclose "a digital data network." It is clear that Lavelle discloses "aggregations of wires carrying similar types of signals" which would include separate audio and video signals (e.g., a bundle of a plurality of wires, each wire carrying for example a discrete analog signal), as well as separate wires for each of the devices attached (e.g., TV tuner 114, CD player 120, etc.). (Lavelle, Col. 9, Lines 60-62, Figures 1A and 1B). Lavelle further discloses that the signals may be multiplexed (e.g., by time, frequency, and codes). (See Col. 9, Line 62 – Col. 10, Line 2). However, Lavelle does not disclose a "digital data network," as recited in claim 1. (Emphasis added).

Appellants note that "[a] claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987). "The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the ... claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236 (Fed. Cir. 1989). See MPEP § 2131.

Here, Lavelle does not disclose every detail, i.e., a digital data network, as is required by 35 U.S.C. 102(e) and MPEP § 2131. In particular, the types of wired communication cited in Lavelle discloses wire bundles, discrete audio and video signals in assumedly analog form, but not a digital data network. Moreover, Appellants submit that a digital data network is not inherent because Lavelle does not contemplate such a configuration. Indeed, Lavelle teaches that different types of buses are possible, but does not teach or suggest a digital data network in an otherwise complete list of bus configurations. Therefore, Lavelle does not teach or suggest "a digital data network," as claim 1 recites.

3. "a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder"

Lavelle does not disclose "a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder," as claimed. Lavelle generally stated that the invention may be implemented in hardware and software which may include a central processing unit (CPU). (Lavelle, Col. 3, Lines 24-43). However, Lavelle does not disclose any detail as to any implementation. Specifically, Lavelle does not disclose "a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder." The Examiner stated that:

Lavelle specifically discloses wherein the entire system is implemented and controlled by a computer platform consisting of a

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CPU, RAM, and I/O. This clearly reads upon the claimed "microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder", and thus applicant's arguments are not convincing. (Final Office Action, at 15-16).

Appellants again point out that, while Lavelle may discuss a CPU, Lavelle does not disclose "a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder." There is no teaching in Lavelle that a microcontroller controls "said interface stage," which, as discussed above, is not even present. Moreover, Lavelle does not teach that a microcontroller controls "said decoder." Lavelle merely discloses that the invention may include a CPU. (Lavelle, Col. 3, Lines 24-43). In addition, Lavelle does not discuss a "microcontroller" at all.¹

In sum, contrary to the Examiner's assertion (Final Office Action, at 15-16), Lavelle does not teach or suggest "an interface stage for interfacing with a digital data network," "a digital data network," or "a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder," as recited by claim 1. Lavelle wholly fails to teach or suggest at least these claim elements. Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, claims 1, 11, and 36, as well as claims 2-10, 12-28, and 37-41, depending respectively therefrom, are in condition for allowance. The Examiner's rejection of these claims as anticipated by Lavelle should be reversed by this Board.

B. Claim 29 (Ground of Rejection No. 1): Lavelle does not teach or suggest the "digital data stream" or "interfacing said decoder board to a digital data network with an interface stage."

Independent claim 29 recites a "digital data stream." As discussed in detail above (see section A) with respect to claims 1, 11, and 36, Lavelle does not disclose a digital data network. Thus, because Lavelle does not teach a digital data network, Lavelle also does not disclose a "digital data stream," as claimed. Moreover, the Examiner's rejection does not address a "digital data stream" but rather focuses on different encoding formats. (Final Office Action, at 6). For at least these reasons, claim 29, as well as claims 30-35, depending therefrom, are in condition for allowance and the Examiner's rejection of this claim should be reversed.

¹ Appellants note that Figure 2 of Lavelle shows a processor 276 that is part of a wireless headphone set 152. (Lavelle, Figure 2, Col. 8, Lines 10-25). However, headphone set 152 does not disclose many of other elements in claim 1, for example, "an audiovisual data stream" (emphasis added), and "connections for connecting said decoder board to one or more audiovisual output devices." (Lavelle, Figure 2). Thus, Lavelle's Figure 2, and processor 276, is not structurally relevant to claim 1.

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C. Claim 30(Ground of Rejection No. 1): Lavelle does not teach or suggest “interfacing said decoder board to a digital data network with an interface stage.”

Claim 30 depends from independent claim 29 and recites “interfacing said decoder board to a digital data network with an interface stage.” As discussed in detail above (see section A) with respect to claims 1, 11, and 36, Lavelle does not disclose “a digital data network” and “a digital data network with an interface stage.” (Emphasis added). For at least these reasons, Lavelle does not disclose the claimed “interfacing said decoder board to a digital data network with an interface stage.” Thus, claim 30 is in condition for allowance, and the Examiner’s rejection of this claim should be reversed.

D. Claims 2, 12, 31, and 37 Are Not Unpatentable Over Lavelle (Ground of Rejection No. 2).

Dependent claims 2, 12, 31, and 37, generally discuss optical networking. In the Final Office Action, and in response to Appellants’ challenge of the Examiner’s taking of Official Notice, the Examiner provided a new reference U.S. Patent 5,848,367 (“Lotocky”) to support the rejection of generally regarding an optical network. However, the Examiner has not shown that the references, when combined, teach or suggest all of the claim limitations. Moreover, the Examiner has not shown a reasonable expectation of success of the combination, or that there is a teaching or suggestion to modify the references.

As discussed above in detail, Lavelle does not teach each and every element of independent claims 1, 11, 29, and 36. The Examiner stated that Lavelle fails to specifically disclose a fiber optic network. (Final Office Action, at 8). However, Lotocky fails to cure the deficiencies of Lavelle. Lotocky discloses using digital fiber optics 123 to communicate from a headend control system 110 to a distribution network 126. (Lotocky, Figure 2, Col. 4, Lines 14-23). Lotocky does not disclose the configuration “for interfacing said decoder board with a fiber optic network,” as claim 2 recites, and is similar to the recitations of claims 12, 31, and 37.

To the contrary, Lotocky teaches using optical networking as a bridge between an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) network and a localized distribution network (e.g., Zone Bridge Units 122), but not to a decoder board. (Lotocky, Figure 2, Col. 4, Lines 14-23). Moreover, Lotocky teaches that communication buses 127 are in compliance with IEEE 1394 electrical standards. (Lotocky, Col. 4, Lines 17-19). Thus, Lotocky discloses distribution in

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both electrical and optical form, but does not teach “interfacing said decoder board with a fiber optic network,” (emphasis added) as claim 2 recites. Lotocky merely demonstrates using an optical fiber as a portion of a distribution system, but not interfacing a decoder board.

Additionally, the Examiner has not shown a reasonable expectation of success to combine Lavelle and Lotocky. Indeed, Lotocky teaches away from Lavelle in that Lotocky teaches a mass distribution system using backbone-type networking methods (e.g., ATM), whereas Lavelle teaches a small-scale (e.g., personal) system. Thus, there is no reasonable expectation of success to combine such divergently configured systems.

As to the lack of motivation to combine, Lavelle teaches against an ATM network 121 of Lotocky because Lavelle is a self-contained unit 100. (Lavelle, Figure 2; Lotocky, Figure 2). As noted above, Lotocky teaches a large-scale mass distribution system. Accordingly, assuming arguendo that, as the Examiner suggests, Lotocky teaches use of optical networks in the same implementation, Lavelle suggests a different network topology (e.g., separate bundles of wires for video 170 and audio 172). (Lavelle, Figure 2). The Examiner’s stated motivation to modify Lavelle – “for the typical advantages provided by fiber optic lines, including volume and weight reduction; lower cost with higher maintainability; no detectable radiation of RF or other signatures; low susceptibility to disruption or damage by nuclear-induced electromagnetic pulse (EMP); and increased link length and bandwidth” – is irrelevant to the teachings of Lavelle at least because the small-scale entertainment unit 100 of Lavelle would not benefit from such a modification due to its small size. (Final Office Action, at 9; Lavelle Figures 2 and 3).

Accordingly, the Examiner has not stated a prima facie case of obviousness. For at least these reasons, claims 2, 12, 31, and 37 are in condition for allowance. The Examiner’s rejection of these claims should be reversed by this Board.

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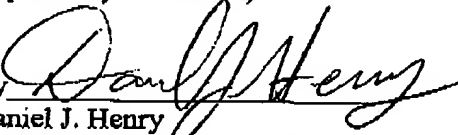
CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing arguments, Appellants respectfully submit that the pending claims are novel over the cited references. The Examiner's rejections of all pending claims are improper because the prior art of record does not teach or suggest each and every element of the claimed invention. In view of the above analysis, a reversal of the rejections of record is respectfully requested of this Honorable Board.

It is believed that any fees associated with the filing of this paper are identified in an accompanying transmittal. However, if any additional fees are required, they may be charged to Deposit Account 18-0013, under Order No. 65783-0007, from which the undersigned is authorized to draw. To the extent necessary, a petition for extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a) is hereby made, the fee for which should be charged against the aforementioned account.

Dated: January 3, 2007

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VIII. CLAIMS APPENDIX

Pursuant to 37 CFR § 41.37(c)(vii), the following listing provides a copy of the claims involved in the appeal.

1. A multi-format decoder board for decoding audiovisual data streams in a plurality of encoding formats for use by one or more audiovisual output devices, said decoder board comprising:
 - an interface stage for interfacing with a digital data network;
 - a multi-format decoder for decoding at least two different encoding formats for an audiovisual data stream;
 - a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder; and
 - connections for connecting said decoder board to one or more audiovisual output devices.
2. The decoder board of claim 1, wherein said interface stage is an optical interface stage for interfacing said decoder board with a fiber optic network.
3. The decoder board of claim 1, wherein said connections for one or more audiovisual output devices comprise a headphone jack.
4. The decoder board of claim 1, wherein said connections for one or more audiovisual output devices comprise a connection for a display device.
5. The decoder board of claim 1, further comprising menu images controlled by the microcontroller and displayed on the audiovisual output device, and a touch-screen connected to said decoder board, said touch-screen used to select menu items and provide user input to said microcontroller which interprets the user input.
6. The decoder board of claim 5, wherein said decoder outputs a decoded video signal to said audiovisual output device.

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7. The decoder board of claim 1, wherein said decoder outputs a decoded audio signal to said interface stage for transmission over said digital network.
8. The decoder board of claim 1, wherein said decoder decodes MPEG-1, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, Motion JPEG, and VCD and provides for required content protection.
9. The decoder board of claim 1, wherein said decoder decodes a data stream output by any of an audio CD player, a DVD player, VCD player or a wireless receiver.
10. The decoder board of claim 1, wherein said decoder decodes an MP3 data stream.
11. A multi-media system in a vehicle comprising:
 - a digital data network installed in a vehicle;
 - at least one storage, playback or receiver device on-board said vehicle for providing an encoded audiovisual data stream to said digital data network;
 - at least one audiovisual output device connected to said digital data network; and
 - a multi-format decoder board for decoding audiovisual data streams in a plurality of encoding formats, said decoder board decoding said audiovisual data stream for use by said at least one audiovisual output device;wherein said decoder board comprises:
 - an interface stage for interfacing with a digital data network;
 - a multi-format decoder for decoding at least two different encoding formats for an audiovisual data stream;
 - a microcontroller for controlling said interface stage and said decoder; and
 - connections for connecting said decoder board to one or more audiovisual output devices.
12. The system of claim 11, wherein said digital data network is a fiber optic network and said interface stage is an optical interface stage for interfacing said decoder board with said fiber optic network.

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13. The system of claim 11, wherein said at least one audiovisual output device comprises a set of headphones and said connections for one or more audiovisual output devices comprise a headphone jack.

14. The system of claim 11, wherein said at least one audiovisual output device comprises a display device and said connections for one or more audiovisual output devices comprise a connection for said display device.

15. The system of claim 11, further comprising menu images controlled by the microcontroller and displayed on the audiovisual output device, and a touch-screen connected to said decoder board, said touch-screen used to select menu items and provide user input to said microcontroller which interprets the user input.

16. The system of claim 15, wherein said decoder outputs a decoded video signal to the display device.

17. The system of claim 11, wherein said decoder outputs a decoded audio signal to said interface stage for transmission over said digital network.

18. The system of claim 11, wherein said decoder decodes MPEG-1, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, Motion JPEG, and VCD data streams and provides for required content protection.

19. The system of claim 11, wherein said decoder decodes a data stream output by any of an audio CD player, a DVD player, a VCD player or a wireless receiver.

20. The system of claim 11, wherein said decoder decodes an MP3 data stream.

21. The system of claim 11, further comprising a hard drive connected to said digital data network.

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22. The system of claim 11, further comprising an electronic memory unit connected to said digital data network.

23. The system of claim 11, further comprising a floppy disk drive connected to said digital data network.

24. The system of claim 11, further comprising an analog antenna and tuner connected to said digital data network.

25. The system of claim 11, further comprising a satellite antenna connected to said digital data network.

26. The system of claim 11, further comprising a DVD player connected to said digital data network.

27. The system of claim 11, further comprising an audio player connected to said digital data network.

28. The system of claim 11, further comprising a VCD or CD-ROM drive connected to said digital data network.

29. A method of handling a digital data stream carrying data encoded in a plurality of different encoding formats, said method comprising processing said digital data stream through a decoder board that comprises a multi-format decoder for decoding at least two different encoding formats for audiovisual data and output a resulting decoded audiovisual signal to one or more audiovisual output devices.

30. The method of claim 29, further comprising interfacing said decoder board to a digital data network with an interface stage, said digital data stream coming to said decoder board via said digital data network.

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31. The method of claim 30, wherein said digital data stream is transmitted over said digital data network optically.

32. The method of claim 29, further comprising outputting a decoded audio signal to a pair of headphones.

33. The method of claim 29, further comprising outputting a decoded audiovisual signal to a display device.

34. The method of claim 29, further comprising controlling said decoder board with a display device connected to said board, said display device displaying a user interface.

35. The method of claim 34, further comprising displaying a decoded video signal from said decoder with said display device.

36. A multi-format decoder board for decoding audiovisual data streams in a plurality of encoding formats for use by one or more audiovisual output devices, said decoder board comprising:

interface means for interfacing with a digital data network;

multi-format decoder means for decoding at least two different encoding formats for an audiovisual data stream;

controller means for controlling said interface and said decoder; and

output means for connecting said decoder board to one or more audiovisual output devices.

37. The decoder board of claim 36, wherein said interface is an optical interface stage for interfacing said decoder board with a fiber optic network.

38. The decoder board of claim 36, further comprising user input means connected to said board for providing user input to said controller means.

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39. The decoder board of claim 36, wherein said decoder decodes MPEG-1, MPEG-2, MPEG-4, Motion JPEG, and VCD data streams and provides for required content protection.

40. The decoder board of claim 36, wherein said decoder decodes a data stream output by any of an audio CD player, a DVD player, a VCD player or a wireless receiver.

41. The decoder board of claim 36, wherein said decoder decodes an MP3 data stream.

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IX. EVIDENCE APPENDIX

None.

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X. RELATED PROCEEDINGS APPENDIX

None.